

Sam Deane, a long time Fauquier County resident, is being honored for his dedication for serving the youth of this county during the sixties and seventies while coaching the Upperville youth baseball team. Sam Deane passed away in 2016, his former players had a reunion in 2018 to honor his memory. Some players had not seen each other since those days on the team making sharing past memories of their coach and the team's past glories even more special on that day. Many of the players played on different teams as they aged and moved up the ladder with Mr. Deane for some it was the last organized sport they ever played in their lives so the memories and gratitude were so heartfelt. It was during the organization of reunion that the idea of a plaque to be placed at Upperville Park to remember their coach and respected friend took form.

In 1965, Jim Jenkins and James Jackson formed the team in Upperville but the following year Jim's job did not allow him to coach and James was drafted and served the following year in Vietnam. Jim knew Sam as he would frequent his country store in Atoka and asked him to take over the team as he knew Sam had coached youth baseball in Fairfax prior to moving to Atoka. He agreed having no idea how much work he would eventually put into teams, the field, the league, the fundraisers and the community. Having two jobs and on a limited income to support his own family Sam Deane took on the challenge for the next two decades with his limited time and resources. The league itself was in its infancy and took much effort to organize in order for teams to play each other county wide and Sam served with others including fellow honored Parks and Recreation board member Carl Bailey.

Sam learned early on the was more to coaching the Upperville team then just showing up for practices and games like he had in a very organized league he was use to back in Fairfax. When he arrived at the field, he saw it was going to take a bit of work. He took it upon himself to mow and make trips to the local creek to get sand and add to the infield. The teams did not have uniforms so he started raising funds and local businesses came to his aid and their business names would be placed on the backs of uniforms including Ace Septic and Wilshire Funeral Home which were always the last to be taking by players each year. He had also had started drives to sell lightbulbs or Christmas trees to afford equipment such as batting helmets, bats, balls, bases etc.

Upperville is a small town and not large enough to field a team so Sam also had to recruit players from other small towns and not all players would be able to travel that far to either practice or game so Sam made sure everyone that wanted to play had a ride. He even bought a truck so he had room for every player. If the team ever stopped for something to eat after a game and a player did not have money Sam would pay and make sure everyone had something to eat. Back in the sixties it was a different time but not on the Upperville Little League team it was half black half white and the teams got along like family one player was later to say on the team we never knew prejudice.

So, it is fitting to honor Sam Deane with this plaque placed at Upperville Park to honor his memory and to further preserve the fond memories of some many players that special time of their youth.